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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 ROME 002200

SIPDIS

CENTCOM FOR J5, POLAD

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MARTINO OUTLINES DEPLOYMENT TO IRAQ FOR PARLIAMENT

1. SUMMARY: ITALIAN MOD MARTINO TOLD PARLIAMENT MAY 14 THAT A CONTINGENT OF ABOUT 3000 MILITARY PERSONNEL WILL BE DEPLOYED AND OPERATIONAL IN IRAQ BY MID-JULY. TWO MINESWEEPS THAT ARE ALREADY IN THEATER WILL BECOME OPERATIONAL SOONER. AN ADVANCE TEAM WILL DEPART FOR IRAQ WITHIN DAYS TO ASSESS ON-THE-GROUND NEEDS FOR THE TROOPS. PARLIAMENT APPROVED MILITARY SUPPORT IN AN APRIL 15 VOTE ON ITALY'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO IRAQ RECONSTRUCTION, AND THE GOI IS FUNDING THE DEPLOYMENT THROUGH AN EXPEDITED PROCESS. THE TROOPS ARE SEPARATE FROM THE UNIT OF CARABINIERI THAT DEPARTED MAY 15 FOR IRAQ TO PROTECT THE ITALIAN RED CROSS FIELD HOSPITAL IN BAGHDAD, ACCORDING TO MARTINO. THE CENTER-RIGHT COALITION PRAISED MARTINO FOR KEEPING PARLIAMENT FULLY INFORMED AND APPROVED THE MISSION. THE CENTER-LEFT OPPOSITION CRITICIZED THE GOI FOR ITS SUBSERVIENCE TO THE U.S. END SUMMARY.

MISSION IS HUMANITARIAN, PARLIAMENT TO APPROVE FUNDING ONLY

2. MOD MARTINO APPEARED BEFORE A JOINT SESSION OF THE SENATE AND CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENSE COMMITTEES MAY 14 TO BRIEF ON THE PLANNED DEPLOYMENT OF ITALIAN TROOPS TO IRAQ. HE STRESSED THAT THE MISSION -- CODE NAMED "ANCIENT BABYLONIA" -- IS FOR HUMANITARIAN AND RECONSTRUCTION PURPOSES, AND TO PROVIDE DIRECT SUPPORT TO THE LOCAL POPULATION. HE STATED THAT IT IS EXPECTED TO LAST SIX MONTHS LEAVING, HOWEVER, THE DOOR OPEN FOR A POSSIBLE EXTENSION. HE REMARKED THAT THERE IS NO NEED FOR A PARLIAMENTARY VOTE AT THIS TIME BECAUSE THE MISSION HAD ALREADY BEEN AUTHORIZED BY PARLIAMENT IN ITS APRIL 15 VOTE, BUT SAID PARLIAMENT WILL HAVE TO APPROVE FUNDING. THE GOI IS PROVIDING IMMEDIATE FUNDING THROUGH A DECREE LAW THAT WILL SOON BE PRESENTED TO PARLIAMENT FOR ITS DISCUSSION AND FINAL APPROVAL. MARTINO DID NOT INDICATE WHEN THE GOI WOULD PRESENT THE DECREE, BUT SAID IT WILL INCLUDE CIVIL RECONSTRUCTION PROJECTS THAT ARE BEING COORDINATED BY THE MFA. (NOTE: UNDER ITALY'S CONSTITUTION, DECREE LAWS ARE TOOLS FOR URGENT MATTERS; THEY ARE EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY AND VALID FOR 60 DAYS. PARLIAMENT HAS 60 DAYS TO DISCUSS, AMEND AND APPROVE A DECREE LAW OR IT EXPIRES. TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, THIS NEVER HAPPENS WITH DECREES INVOLVING FUNDING FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE MISSIONS. END NOTE.)

ITALIANS WITH THE BRITISH; WHO COMMANDS?

3. MARTINO TOLD PARLIAMENT THAT ITALY'S AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY WILL BE IN THE SOUTHERN BRITISH SECTOR. THE ITALIAN COMMANDER, WHO WILL BE BASED IN BASRA AT THE BRITISH DIVISIONAL COMMAND, WILL ENSURE THAT ITALIAN TROOPS ARE USED EXCLUSIVELY TO IMPLEMENT THE ASSIGNED MISSION APPROVED BY THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT, WHICH WILL HAVE DISCRETION TO CHOOSE EXCEPTIONS OR DIFFERENT USES. HE SAID THE TROOPS WILL BE SUBJECT TO THE ITALIAN MILITARY CODE OF WAR AS IT WAS RECENTLY AMENDED AND ASSURED PARLIAMENT THAT THEY WILL EXERCISE THE LOWEST POSSIBLE USE OF FORCE, IN COMPLIANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL LAW AND ITALIAN LAWS AND REGULATIONS. THE TROOPS WILL BE UNDER THE OPERATIONAL COMMAND OF THE ITALIAN CHIEF OF DEFENSE STAFF, "BUT THE BRITISH DIVISIONAL COMMAND HEADQUARTERED IN BASRA WILL HAVE OPERATIONAL CONTROL OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONTINGENTS, INCLUDING THE ITALIANS, IN THE ENTIRE SOUTHERN SECTOR."

MARTINO EXPLAINS TASKS...

4. MARTINO CONFIRMED FM FRATTINI'S APRIL 15 STATEMENTS TO PARLIAMENT, NOTING THAT THE ITALIAN CONTINGENT WILL BE TASKED WITH CREATING AND MAINTAINING A SECURE ENVIRONMENT, CONTRIBUTING TO PUBLIC ORDER AND MILITARY POLICE UNITS, SUPPORTING DEMINING ACTIVITIES, DETECTING BIOLOGICAL AND CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES, PROVIDING HEALTH ASSISTANCE, PROVIDING AIRPORT MANAGEMENT CAPABILITIES, SUPPORTING OHRA ACTIVITIES, AND RESTORING INFRASTRUCTURE. THE TROOPS WILL HAVE TO ENGAGE IN RECONNAISSANCE MISSIONS AND PATROLS, BUT THEIR PRESENCE ON THE GROUND "WILL BE AS DISCREET AS POSSIBLE" AND THE "INTERVENTION AND IMMEDIATE RESPONSE TO POSSIBLE SITUATIONS OF DANGER WILL BE GUIDED BY THE INTELLIGENCE SERVICES AND WILL BE BASED ON THE CONTINGENT'S HIGH MOBILITY, FLEXIBILITY, AND DYNAMISM, AS WELL AS ON HELICOPTERS."

...AND DEPLOYMENT TIMING

ACTION EUR-00

INFO	LOG-00	AID-00	CIAE-00	SRPP-00	UTED-00	VC-00	TEDE-00
	INR-00	IO-00	L-00	VCE-00	AC-01	NEA-00	NSAE-00
	OIC-02	OMB-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00
	SP-00	SS-00	TEST-00	TRSE-00	T-00	USIE-00	PMB-00
	PRM-00	DRL-01	G-00	SAS-00	/005W		
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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

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